



# Your Housing Rights

State and Federal laws provide strong protections for people with disabilities against housing discrimination. The laws that protect the fair housing rights of people with disabilities include:

- Federal Fair Housing Act Amendments
- Massachusetts Housing Rights of People with Disabilities
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Americans with Disabilities Act

## What Protections Do These Laws Provide?

- It is illegal for a Housing Authority or any landlord to refuse to rent to someone because of their disability.
- It is illegal for a Housing Authority or any landlord ***to discriminate in the terms, conditions or privileges*** related to a rental unit including a higher rent or different lease terms.
- It is illegal for a Housing Authority or any landlord to ***use different eligibility or screening criteria*** for applicants with disabilities.
- It is illegal for a Housing Authority or any landlord to ***evict*** someone because of their disability.
- It is illegal for a Housing Authority or any landlord to ***steer*** people with disabilities to specific developments.
- Landlords are ***not allowed to ask whether an applicant or tenant has a disability or about the nature or severity of an applicant's or tenant's disability*** except under very specific circumstances such as determining that an applicant is eligible for a specially designed unit or program.
- An owner must allow a person with a disability to make ***reasonable modifications*** to a unit if needed to fully use and enjoy the unit. In Massachusetts, owners of publicly funded housing or private housing with ten or more units are required to make and pay for reasonable modifications.
- An owner must make ***reasonable accommodations*** in rules, policies, practices or services when necessary to afford a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a unit, including public and common areas.
- Facilities that are ***newly constructed or substantially rehabilitated must be made accessible or adaptable*** depending on the law covering the property and the construction work.
- It is illegal to discriminate against someone in housing because of their disability, the disability of someone who lives with or plans to live with the renter, or the disability of someone associated with the renter.

## **For More Information On Your Housing Rights Contact Your Local Independent Living Center**

Boston Center for Independent Living .....	617-338-6665
Metro West Center for Independent Living .....	508-875-7853
Northeast IL Program .....	978-687-4288
IL Center of North Shore and Cape Ann .....	978-741-0077
Southeast Center for Independent Living .....	508-679-9210
Independence Associates .....	508-583-2166
Cape Organization for the Rights of the Disabled (CORD) .....	508-775-8300
Center for Living and Working .....	508-798-0350
Stavros Center for Independent Living.....	413-256-0473
Ad-Lib Center for Independent Living.....	413-442-7047
Multicultural Independent Living Center of Boston.....	617-288-9431

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment and public services provided by government agencies. If consumers or employees of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability, they should contact the Diversity Director,

Mary F. Connelly, Esquire  
Director of Diversity, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission  
600 Washington Street, Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02111  
617-204-3736 or 617-727-1354 (fax)  
[Mary.Connelly@MassMail.state.ma.us](mailto:Mary.Connelly@MassMail.state.ma.us)

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